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Secretariat

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INFORMATION CIRCULAR

To: Members of the staff

From: The Assistant Secretary-General for General Services

Subject: TRAVEL AND SHIPPING RESTRICTIONS

1. The purpose of the present circular is to inform staff members of the effect that the current situation between Iraq and Kuwait may have on their official travel arrangements and the shipment of household goods and personal effects.

2. A number of countries and air carriers are introducing restrictions that should be borne in mind when planning official travel and the shipment of goods by air freight.

Travel and visa arrangements

3. With respect to travel reservations, travellers should be fully aware of all instructions put forward by the United Nations security co-ordinators for specific areas around the world and must comply with them fully. A copy of the instructions is available for consultation from the Travel Unit, room S-2011 at Headquarters and at similar offices elsewhere.

4. All staff members should examine their travel documents periodically to ensure that the documents are valid in the event that they are required to undertake official travel on short notice.

5. Travellers should be aware that various airlines are enforcing ad hoc procedures with regard to security checking prior to boarding and are therefore requiring travellers to check in approximately three hours ahead of departure time. All checked baggage is subject to physical search and positive baggage matches are being utilized by many carriers to ensure that any passenger who checks a bag takes the flight for which the bag is checked. In addition, new restrictions are being introduced on the carriage of cargo on aircraft, resulting in flight delays.

Household goods and personal effects

6. Air shipments are being screened prior to loading. Some airlines have elected not to accept household goods or personal effects for shipment. Articles such as liquor and household cleaning fluids are being inspected for content and correct packaging and may in some instances be disallowed. Electrical equipment may be inspected and should be packaged separately from other household items for easy access by the inspectors.

7. Items that are packaged by the owners (i.e. not professionally packed) are, in most cases, rejected for carriage or are subjected to verification by physical inspection. It is understood that to date shipments that are packed by professional packaging companies where an itemized packaging list is provided stand the least chance of rejection. Hence, it is advisable to select a packaging company to pack the shipment.

8. All shipments will be subject to mandatory delay prior to carriage and routings are at the convenience of the carrier. The shipping date and routing information will be released only after the shipment has reached its destination.

9. The cancellation of many international flights has resulted in less available cargo space. Also, the shipment of household goods and personal effects is considered by many air carriers as low priority cargo and is therefore subject to unloading at intermediate points en route to their destination. It is therefore advisable that staff members commence the procedures for initiating their shipments well in advance of the time normally required.

10. The staff will be kept informed of further developments in this matter.